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United States Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service, MS 5412
1201 Elmwood Park Blvd.
New Orleans, LA 70123

RE: ***Long Island Offshore Wind Park Scoping Comments For Environmental Impact Statement***

I am writing to express my support for the LIPA/FPL offshore wind project proposed for off Jones Beach, Long Island, NY. Clean, renewable energy such as wind is a much needed to meet the high demand on the Long Island electric grid, and to do so without using fossil fuels. Burning fossil fuels releases pollutants into the air such as carbon dioxide which contributes to global warming, as well as NOx and SOx which are also both greenhouse gases and contribute to human health impacts. NO2 is also a component of smog which contributes to asthma. Global warming is associated with sea level rise which will affects Long Island, more intense storms, melting glaciers, and disruptions of weather patterns which have major impacts on oceans, wildlife (*see below*), and human quality of life.

These harmful pollutants will be avoided by generating energy using wind turbines. I would like to request that Minerals Management Services (MMS) quantify the amount of pollutants saved by the proposed wind farm which is predicted to produce about 140 mw.

Personally, I find the wind turbines to be aesthetically pleasing and in fact a symbol of hope for the energy future of the country. However, since the small group of opponents to this project have raised a negative aesthetic argument against the wind park, I would urge MMS to suggest practical ways to mitigate any view impacts. One suggestion might be using fewer, more-efficient turbines if commercially available. I would also like to see a referenced summary of the success of offshore wind parks in Europe, since this issue has also been raised.

Many people are concerned about the impact of the wind park on birds and marine life, such as whales. I too am concerned and believe this deserves a thorough review but I believe the impact of burning fossil fuels is far greater. Below I am pasting in some research I collected about impacts on wildlife from global warming or fossil fuel use. It would also be helpful if MMS could quantify the lowered impact on wildlife from reducing our use of fossil fuels through this project and all wind projects around the nation, which make up about 1% of the nation's supply.

I look forward to this first-in-the-nation project, right here on Long Island, setting a great precedent for the rest of the nation which so urgently needs to rid itself of dependence on

fossil fuels. I hope that the federal government will establish more incentives for wind and other renewable energy sources.

Thank you,

Elisabeth Fiteni, MSEL

The following are referenced documentations of the effects of greenhouse gases, fossil fuel use, and global warming on wildlife.

1) Researchers believe that in addition to other factors such as pesticides, warmer waters in Long Island Sound possibly contributed to the lobster die-off of 1999. (*NY/CT Sea Grant's Long Island Sound Lobster Initiative*)

2) 110 frog species in Central and South America have vanished in the past few decades seemingly due to a fungus that thrives in warmer weather, when night temperatures do not differ enough from daytime temperatures. (*Newsday Jan. 12, 2006*)

3) Krill (a shrimp-like crustacean) populations in the Antarctic Ocean are down 80% in the last 3 decades due to rapid loss of sea ice where krill normally feed. Krill are a food source for Antarctic whales, seals and penguins. *British Antarctic Survey, as reported by Reuters and The Associated Press 11/4/04.*

4) A colony of Antarctic Adelie penguins dwindled from 320 breeding pairs to 54 between 1990 and 2004, and this reflects the situation with Adelies in the whole Antarctic region. Average winter temperatures have increased nearly 9°F over 5 decades and sea ice has retreated by a fifth since the mid 1970s, depriving Adelies of an important feeding platform from which they hunt krill. The Adelies are being replaced with the sub antarctic gentoo penguins, which has begun migrating toward the pole from more temperate climes. *National Geographic Sept. 2004*

5) The oceans are absorbing so much excess carbon dioxide that the oceans are becoming acidic which is affecting coral reefs. Corals are shedding the algae that nourish them, and becoming bleached white, as water temperatures rise. In 1998, world coral suffered its worst year on record, with 16% bleached or dead. *Ibid.*

6) In the Virgin Islands, warm weather during the middle third of incubation causes the eggs of endangered Hawkbill sea turtles to yield more females. More females have been detected among sea turtles worldwide, with unknown long-term consequences for the species. *Ibid.*

7) Four species threatened by global warming in polar or mountain regions:
• polar bears - scientists are recording lower body mass in polar bears, and retreating sea ice is believed to be the culprit.

• monarch butterflies - freezing temperatures and more precipitation proved a lethal for millions of monarch butterflies in Mexico's mountains in early 2000.
• pygmy possum
• gelada baboon, *Ibid.*

8) Caribou from the Porcupine herd in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge have declined in number from 178,000 in 1989 to 123,000 in 2001. Scientists suspect that warming is the cause because the spring greening starts and ends sooner, and vegetation may die back before calves can gain enough weight to survive the winter. *Ibid.*

9) Researchers See Warming Behind Pacific Seabird Dieoffs: Washington Weather May Be Killing Seabirds, ENN.Com, The Associated Press, *Feb. 1, 2006*
NEAH BAY, Wash. - The mass starvation deaths of murres on Tatoosh Island off the Olympic Peninsula may be due in part to unusual weather patterns along the West Coast, scientists say…. the normal fledge count plummeted from 8,000 chicks to 88 last year. The species of fish they usually prey upon are being replaced by new species. Last year didn't have the winds and currents necessary to maintain the network of marine food crucial to the seabirds' diet. Breeding failures during the summer were preceded by tens of thousands of birds washing up dead on beaches in Washington, Oregon and California. Murres on Tatoosh Island feed on sand lance, herring, surf smelt and eulachon. Last summer the birds couldn't find any sand lance and hardly any herring. Catches of the other two fish also were reduced.

10) Scientists Foresee Thousands of Coming Extinctions: Global Warming Threatens Extinctions
Reuters News Service, April 11, 2006
OSLO - Global warming will become a top cause of extinction from the tropical Andes to South Africa with thousands of species of plants and animals likely to be wiped out in coming decades, a study said on Tuesday. "Global warming ranks among the most serious threats to the planet's biodiversity and, under some scenarios, may rival or exceed that due to deforestation," according to the study in the journal Conservation Biology. Scientists said their study backed an earlier report that suggested global warming could commit a quarter of the world's species to extinction by 2050.

11) Pikas (a member of the rabbit family) in North America could face extinction because rising temperatures in alpine regions are driving the heat-sensitive mammals uphill to summits that effectively become shrinking islands of habitat. In some locations, entire Pika populations already have disappeared. *From "No room at the Top, " National Wildlife Federation magazine, December/January 2006.*

12) The white-tailed ptarmigan (similar to a dove), an alpine bird, uses snow as a ladder to reach high willow branches for food. Researchers have discovered that ptarmigan suffer population declines and poor condition in spring during warm winters with inadequate snow. *Ibid.*

13) "Other birds, including American pipits, horned larks, and rosy finches breed in the

alpine area atop mountains but migrate to warmer climates during winter. If predictions are true that global warming will cause more weather variability and extreme events, these species could also face breeding challenges. Horned larks, for examples, feed every 20 minutes. Exposed to freak storms or heat, they have trouble both incubating eggs and finding food. Keeping eggs at a constant temperature is a huge challenge, [one scientist] says. Because of the short breeding season, alpine species generally have fewer offspring each summer, which means reproductive failures can dramatically impact populations." *Ibid.*

14) "The effects [of air pollution and acid rain] tend rather to be indirect, mainly through loss of food sources and the disturbance of reproductive systems. The connection is clearest as regards food loss in acidified waters, which has hit for instance otters, dippers, and ospreys." *Air Pollution and Biodiversity, Environmental factsheet from the Swedish NGO Secretariat on Acid Rain, October 1997, from acidrain.org.*

15) Recent studies (1994) show that acid rain is causing the decline of several species of songbirds in Europe. *World Resources Institute, Research topics: Climate change, energy and transportation: Air Pollution at http://climate.wri.org.*

16) In the Netherlands, researchers found that up to 40 percent of certain song birds were laying defective eggs as a result of too little calcium. The birds eat certain snails that were declining because the soils lack calcium, a result of leaching by acid rain. *Ibid.*

17) "Oil may escape from ships through accidents, or through deliberate dumping. Every year, more than 300,000 birds are killed by oil off the south coast of the island of Newfoundland alone." This is the same number killed when the *Exxon Valdez* ran aground in Alaska in 1989. *Oil Pollution and Birds, Canadian Wildlife Service, Atlantic region.*

"If wind power plants are sited in regions screened for sensitive local bird populations, the environmental footprint of wind-generated electricity is quite small when compared to the wildlife and ecosystem impacts of fossil fuel mining and fuel combustion."
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